

# **EIS/R Comments**



**CALFED  
BAY-DELTA  
PROGRAM**

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## **M e m o r a n d u m**

Date: July 8, 1998

To: CALFED Policy Group

From: Lester A. Snow *K. H. Snow*  
Executive Director *for*

Subject: EIS/EIR Comments

### **Summary**

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program has closed the public comment period on the Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR. The Program has received more than 1,500 individual letters, thousands of postcards, form letters and letter writing campaigns, and heard from 469 speakers at 17 public hearings. The top five topics of comment are:

- Conservation
- New Facilities
- Agricultural Impacts
- Protection of Water Rights
- Finance and Economics

### **Detailed Discussion**

The following provides additional information related to the comment areas identified above:

Conservation and new facilities were the most common topics of comment and were generally related. Individuals who believed that conservation alone could provide the solution to the problems in the Bay-Delta were generally opposed to new facilities. Those who believed conservation was not enough to solve the problem generally supported new facilities. Virtually all believed that improvements in urban, agricultural and environmental water conservation are a critical part of the Program.

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#### **CALFED Agencies**

**California**  
The Resources Agency  
Department of Fish and Game  
Department of Water Resources  
California Environmental Protection Agency  
State Water Resources Control Board

**Federal**  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Reclamation  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Department of Commerce  
National Marine Fisheries Service

Many were concerned about the impacts to agriculture both from land conversion and changes in water use. The agricultural community was concerned about the conversion of acreages targeted for ecosystem restoration and other project purposes resulting in significant redirected impacts including adverse impacts to third parties, agricultural communities and agricultural economies. There was concern that changes in water use through transfers and conservation could also adversely affect agricultural communities.

The need to protect existing water rights was a widely supported comment. There was a particular emphasis on protection of "Area of Origin" water rights.

There were two main themes of finance and economic comments. There was concern about fair and equitable distribution of costs for the Program. There was also a concern regarding land conversion resulting in changes to the tax base and the loss of local income to support infrastructure.

All public comment letters will be made available for public and agency review on the Internet through the U.C. Berkeley Library Project. Additional information on comments will be provided at the August Policy Group meeting. CALFED staff are responding to comments. Responses will be included in the Response to Comment Appendix which will be included in the Revised Draft, scheduled for release in December 1998.

#### **Action**

This item is for information only.